United Nations A/63/378

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 September 2008

Original: English

Sixty-third session
Agenda item 8
General debate

Letter dated 25 September 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of the Republic of Cyprus in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by H.E. Abdullah Gül, President of the Republic of Turkey, on 23 September 2008, in the General Assembly (see annex).*

I should be most grateful if you could arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(*Signed*) Minas **Hadjimichael**

* See A/63/PV.5.

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Annex

Statement of the delegation of the Republic of Cyrus in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the President of the Republic of Turkey in the general debate of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly on 23 September 2008*

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus welcomes the support that the President of the Republic of Turkey has expressed for the ongoing effort undertaken by the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus within the good offices mission of the United Nations Secretary-General in order to reach a political settlement in Cyprus. At the same time, we would like to clarify that these efforts to reach a political settlement in Cyprus aim at the evolution of the Republic of Cyprus into a bizonal, bicommunal federal State with political equality, as set out in relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. This basis of the settlement was agreed upon and recently reaffirmed by the two communities in Cyprus, thus allowing the launch of full-fledged negotiations. The objective of the current negotiation process is to reunify Cyprus through a settlement that serves the interests of Cypriots themselves.

As regards the so-called "unfair isolation" of the Turkish Cypriots that the President of the Republic of Turkey referred to in his statement, I would like to clarify that the economic disparities between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot communities in Cyprus are the direct result of the ongoing occupation of a substantial part of the island by Turkish troops. Despite the numerous adverse consequences for all Cypriots resulting from the invasion and occupation, the Greek Cypriot community managed to rebuild the Cypriot economy through many sacrifices. With respect particularly to the Turkish Cypriot community, its per capita income now stands at US$ 12,000, hardly reminiscent of any isolation. The Republic of Cyprus continues to support the Turkish Cypriot community with packages of social and financial measures on the domestic level and through financial packages of the European Union on the community level. The Cyprus Government is committed to continuing this support because it considers, inter alia, the economic integration of the two communities on the island to be paramount for the seamless reunification of Cyprus.

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* See A/63/PV.5.